

1. A Limited Archæological Survey of the Han River Valley in Central Korea

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Upon my arrival in the Seoul area in July of 1960, I felt impelled to do a certain amount of limited research in the little-known Neolithic levels of Korea. Unfortunately, I had neither the time nor the transportation needed for a broad survey, so the only alternative, it appeared, was to select a 'sampling zone' where methods would be confined mainly to surface gathering and occasional testing. The survey has continued from July 17 to the date of this writing (November 17, 1960). During this time, working only on Sundays, I was able to define 17 sites which fell into the category of either Neolithic, early historic or both. Three of these, which I feel are the most significant, I shall describe for they contain information most badly needed by Far-Eastern scholars concerned with mainland Asia and trans-Pacific cultural affinities.

The sampling zone extended eastward from the city of Seoul to a point where the river enters the foothills of the Talbaek Range some 20 miles due east of Seoul. The broad river valley, laced with tributaries, is known as the Yongsan Plain and extends past Seoul to the junction of the Imjin River about 15 to 16 miles to the west of the city. A detailed sketch map with the locations of the discovered sites is deposited with the National Museum in Seoul.

The hills are of the crystalline rock variety relating geologically to Tertiary mountain-making accompanied by coastal uplifts. Peneplaning has resulted in gross erosional effect which has been further aggravated through deforestation mostly in historic times. River valley sediments are clays, sands and gravels, the latter being mainly rocks of metamorphic nature-gneisses, schists and quartz or quartzites. Some granites occur in magmatic masses and outcroppings are quarried for building stone.

The Soksil Site (KY-2)

Reconnaissance began on the north bank of the Han River near the small village of Soksil-li where enlisted U.S. Army soldiers had been assisting villagers in their 4-H Club programme. After finding sherds of both Silla (58 B.C. to A.D. 932) and Koryo (A.D. 932 to 1392) in the village area I designated the village a site. An elderly informant told me that the village had existed there for over a thousand years and at one time had been an important river community. Samples were gathered and the site numbered KY-1 (Koreans use 'KG' in their system but only assign numbers to sites having Early Neolithic evidence. To avoid duplication and also to include *all* sites I used 'KY' to indicate Kyonggi-do Province). Proceeding westward along the river I arrived at a low ridge-like extension of a wall of higher hills which rose with fiord-like steepness from the river edge some 30 metres. A small spring-fed

stream borders the hill on its western slope. Site KY-2 is on the top of this hill (Pl. Ia).

Examination of the surface resulted in an impressive collection of sand and grit tempered pottery together with a few chipped (Pl. Ib) and polished stone tools. Most of the artifacts occurred in the talus of the eroding slopes. Much of the hill was quite devoid of vegetation barring a few clumps of grass here and there. Many fragments of shrapnel suggested the hill served as a target during the Korean War. The explosions probably accelerated the erosional process and caused the banks to slough. The sloughing action exposed several dark strata which proved to be occupational levels which were subjected to limited testing. In two of these a total of 3 restorable earthenware vessels was recovered. With Dr Kim Won-Yong of the National Museum in Seoul, we opened two tests on the summit of the hill where some evidence of stratigraphy was encountered. Dr Kim identified Early, Middle and Late Neolithic pottery among our samples. A form of the early Neolithic 'comb-incised' ware was found on the talus surface. This was a well-made steatite-tempered incised ware (see pottery descriptions).

A total of 5 pottery types were recognized at KY-2. Plans for extensive excavation of the site were made by Dr Kim to begin late in the autumn of 1960.

The Misa-ri Site (KY-9)

Although several smaller sites were found in late August and early September, probably our most important site for the Early Neolithic was found on a small island in the Han River some two miles southeast of the Soksil community. The site was first discovered by some boys of the Soksil village who brought sherd samples in for my inspection. These proved to be the sand-tempered incised ware which has been named 'comb-incised' pottery.

The productive level was defined as a 15-in. thick gumbo-like dark zone covered by 30 in. of white loose sand (Pl. IIa). Since the covering field was in crops (sorghum) we were not able to conduct a proper stratigraphic test. Hundreds of sherds and chipped stone adze-like implements were gathered from the beach below the 8 to 10 m. high bank where the exposure was first noted. Dr Kim numbered this site KG-9 and I listed it as KY-9 in my series.

A close examination of the bank disclosed a 36-in. wide feature which contained sherds, cracked stone and several acorns (Pl. IIa). The latter were retained for future identification but were inadequate for dating samples. Three decorative styles were noted among the gathered sherds— Misa-ri Incised (Pl. IIb), Misa-ri Comb-Incised and Misa-ri Cord-Imprinted. The latter was of interest since no cord-marked pottery had been found before in association with this pottery type. Chipped stone was most crude. Especially selected water-worn stones, usually rectangular or elongate in form, were chipped on one face only until an axe-like object was produced (Pl. IIc). These were possibly ancestral to types noted at Soksil. The latter were of superior workmanship and had been chipped on all faces. I was particularly interested in the Misa-ri pottery in view of its close resemblance to the Sumiyoshi pottery of Early Jōmon in Aomori Prefecture. Most of the vessels from the Sumiyoshi site at Takadate-oka (from my unpublished notes based on a 1949 dig) in

Aomori, were practically identical with the Misa-ri ware in that both were straight-sided conoidal-based vessels whose decorated surface extended from lip to base. The main difference was that the Sumiyoshi Pottery had been incised with scallop shells. Further, no Sumiyoshi sherds showed any cord impressions.

The Tokso-ri Site (KY-11)

During the early part of November, I discovered a very extensive Late Neolithic site underlying a cord-marked pottery level which, in turn, underlay a full-blown Paekche Period (18 B.C. to A.D. 660) village of the formative to early phase. This site was exposed along a 10-m. high bank along the Han River about one half mile north-west of the modern village of Tokso-ri. Examination of the bank indicated that occupational evidence was buried in a compact sandy clay to a depth of at least 42 in. (charcoal streaks were detected at 52 in.). Much of the upper 15 in. consisted of loose flood deposited sand. The levels from the typological view-point were, from the lowest up, Zone I to Zone III. Zone I contained reddish Han River Plain of the Soksil type. This underlay a similar but much harder and thinner red ware which was decorated with fine cord impressions, check stamping and simple stamp motifs. Occasionally, sherds so decorated also showed superimposed incised lines running parallel with the rim.

A few sherds of the Zone I red ware appeared to have been wheel-made. There was a sharp difference between the Han River Plain pottery and the decorated red ware in terms of pottery vessel form. The decorated ware was somewhat globular with a sharply everted rim. Decorated areas were confined to an area just below the point where the rim everted (necks were considerably constricted in most specimens) downward to the base. The cord-marking and check-stamping was done in random fashion resulting in overstampng. The checks were not in linear form and ranged in size from very small (2 mm.) to medium in size (4 mm.). One sherd had a combination of a checked and corded surface. As a rule, rims were plain. Lips were flattened and occasionally grooved. One polished stone chisel or small celt was found in association with the decorated red ware.

In Zone II, was found mostly pottery decorated in the manner of the decorated red ware but much harder and gray, brown or black in colour indicating an abrupt change in firing techniques. Also in Zone II were several sherds of bluish-gray stoneware. The latter type, together with a very soft light-gray ware, dominated Zone III and ran into the plough zone. None of the stoneware was cord-marked but many sherds were either plain, check or simple stamp or decorated in a curious complicated stamping style which Dr Kim calls 'lattice' pattern (Kim 1960: 21). Kim also includes the check and simple stamped pottery in his 'lattice-pattern' category. The earlier ware of the cord-marked style with the superimposed incised lines is known to Dr Kim as 'mat-pattern' pottery.

It is tempting to speculate as to the significance of the Tokso-ri site. Several miles to the southwest and on the south bank of the Han River is the large Paekche site of Pungnap-ri which might be identified as the first capital settled by On-jo in 18 B.C. If that is the case, the Tokso-ri site, which seems to produce the same type of

ceramics as Pungnap-ri, may well have co-existed with it. Dr Lim further relates the stamped pottery styles with those found in the Kimhae shell mound near Pusan (Kim 1960: 20-24) which are proto-Silla.

Whether the hard red ware of the decorated variety in Zone I evolved from the rather crude soft Han River Plain is another matter of speculation. Three other sites featuring Han River Plain ware have failed to produce the same decorated red ware except for the small site at Okkok on the south bank of the Han opposite the Seoul suburb of Tukto. This site had a few weathered sherds of check stamp ware. Over 90% of the Okkok site pottery was Han River Plain, however.

Historically, the Han River basin was occupied by a rather barbaric group known as the Mahan at the time On-jo arrived to form the Paekche kingdom. The Mahan had been organized to some degree in about 193 B.C. by Ki-jun, the deposed ruler of the Ki-ja kingdom of North Korea. On-jo, son of Chu-mong, king of Koguryo fled southward after a family difficulty and with a group of followers settled among the Mahan. In all likelihood, he brought with him certain cultural traditions known to the Koguryo which involved Chinese type artifacts including pottery of the Han Dynasty variety. This pottery is known to include stamped wares of the type found at Tokso-ri and Pungnap-ri as well as at certain pre-Lolang sites around Pyong-yang (Kim 1960: 27). The pottery of the hard gray type in Zone III at Tokso-ri is somewhat similar to certain early Silla and Kaya potteries as well as the Japanese variant, Iwaibe or Sue pottery.

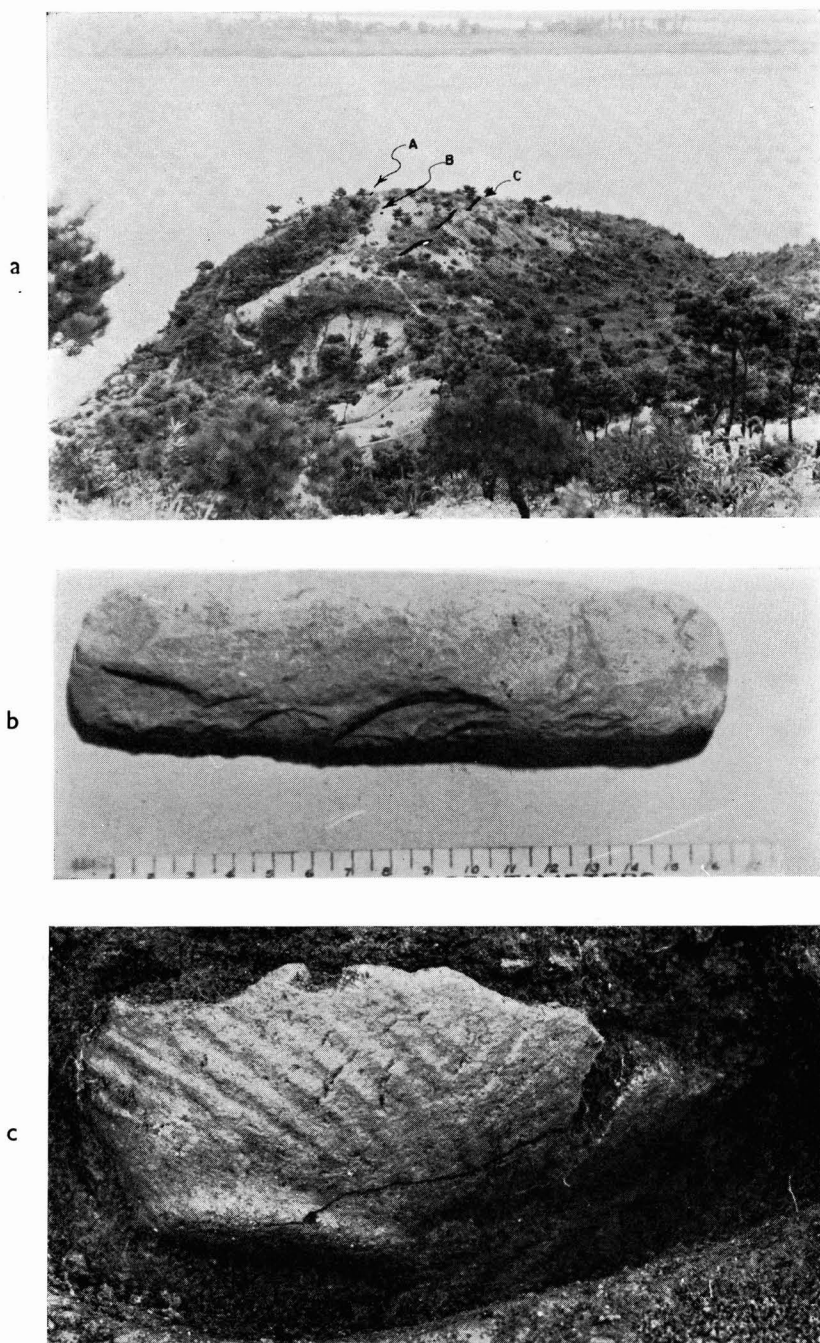
There are, of course, many gaps to be filled in the archæological picture in Korea. My reconnaissance, I feel, has produced enough information at least to point the potentialities in the field and the fact that adequate sites do exist to secure good definitions of prehistoric and protohistoric levels.

DESCRIPTIONS OF NEOLITHIC POTTERY

I. Early Neolithic Types

A. Soksil Incised

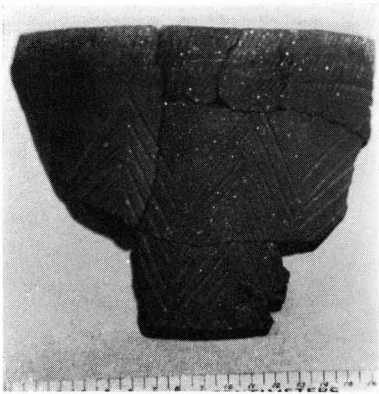
VESSEL DESCRIPTION:	Insufficient samples gathered to determine body form, rim or basal shape.
TEMPER:	Ungraded steatite grit which extrudes to surface.
SURFACE TEXTURE:	Smooth. Steatite gives sherd slick feeling when rubbed.
COLOUR:	Orange to yellow. Occasionally buff. Core is brown to dark orange.
MANUFACTURING METHOD:	Coiled.
HARDNESS:	About 2.
DECORATION:	Narrow rectilinear incised lines on body sherds. Some arranged in 'herring-bone' pattern. The extent of decoration on vessel body is not known since no rims or basal sherds were found.
TYPE SITE:	Soksil Site (KY-2 in my series, KG-8 in Korean system).
OTHER SITES:	None.
GEOGRAPHICAL RANGE:	Not known, however, Dr Kim regards the type as a part of the 'comb-incised' complex of early neolithic in which case it might be found mainly in central and northeastern Korea.
CULTURAL RELATIONSHIP:	Probably a variant or ancestral to Misa-ri types (see Misa-ri Incised).
ASSOCIATED ARTIFACTS:	Unknown. All sherds from Soksil were surface finds.
CHRONOLOGICAL POSITION:	Uncertain. It seems likely that this is an early ceramic type in Korea and stylistically related to the Misa-ri ware. No sherds of the latter occurred at Soksil however.



Soksil site (KY-2) and artifacts. *a.* Site KY-2 looking southwest with south shore of the Han River in the background. Tests at points A, B, and C produced broken whole pots. The lines starting near C show where occupational levels were exposed; *b.* Middle Neolithic(?) stone axe (16.5 cm. long); *c.* flat base of a Han River Simple Stamp vessel *in situ*.



a



b



c

Misa-ri site (KY-9) and artifacts. *a*. Site KY-9 Black cultural layer of 15 in. to 19 in. thickness is directly below a sand layer of 25 in. to 30 in. At the base of the black layer below point A is a pit in which were found artifacts and acorns; *b* Portion of a Misa-ri Incised vessel (height 13.8 cm.); *c*. Early Neolithic stone tools (maximum length of longer tool 15.9 cm.)

B. Misa-ri Incised (Fig. 1a and Pl. IIb)

PRIOR DATA:	Described in Korean text as 'Comb-Incised' by Dr Kim (1960: 17) or 'Comb-Pattern' pottery. Known to Japanese archaeologists in pre-1945 as an early type of prehistoric pottery. Excavated in quantity at the Amsari Site on south bank of Han River by Japanese, however, practically no records exist on this.
VESSEL DESCRIPTION:	Straight-sided, conoidal base with rounded lip. Quite smooth inside and decorated on exterior with combination of punctate and rectilinear incised lines applied with stick or comb-like implement. Although lines are generally parallel in certain motifs, they were not <i>all</i> 'comb' applied. Most popular motifs were herring-bone and nested chevrons, points upward. Punctuations always confined to rim area include stick, finger-nail and stab-and-drag finger nail or dentate (with toothed tool). Two sherds found with cord-mark motifs. (Average vessel medium in size—4-6 quart cap.)
TEMPER:	Sand and mica predominate. Grit and shell used in minority.
COLOUR:	Usually reddish to orange. Less frequent are buffs to brown. Core brown or orange. Black is extremely rare but does occur.
MANUFACTURING METHOD:	Coiling.
HARDNESS:	2 to 2.5 in average sherd.
TYPE SITE:	Misa-ri (KY-9 my number, KG-9, Korean number). Kyonggi-do, Korea.
OTHER SITES:	Amsa-ri, destroyed by flood. KY-3, one sherd. Six other sites the names of which not known to the writer. Sites known to be more common in North Korea.
GEOGRAPHICAL RANGE:	Central to northeastern Korea.
CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS:	Strong similarity in terms of vessel shape and general appearance to Sumiyoshi pottery of Early Jōmon origin in northern Japan. Finger-nail stab-and-drag decorative trait known in Early Jōmon of Central Japan (Morio). Probably also related to Soksil incised.
ASSOCIATED ARTIFACTS:	The most common artifact to be found <i>in situ</i> with Misa-ri pottery was the chipped adze. These crude pebble made implements had been pre-selected for form and chipped to proper dimensions either for hand-holding or hafting. All were worked on one face only except in the case of one knife-like specimen which had a retouched edge resulting in rim spalling on the opposite face. Pebble hammers were also found on the surface at Misa-ri.
OTHER VARIANTS:	Misa-ri Plain. This is identical to Misa-ri incised ware except for being devoid of decoration.

II. Middle Neolithic Series

A. Yangju Plain (named by writer from the Yangju District identified as Middle Neolithic by Dr Kim) (Fig. 1b).

PRIOR DATA:	Not known.
VESSEL DESCRIPTION:	Large (30-40 in. high, 32 in. mouth diam.) to medium slightly constricted neck, slightly everted rim rounded lip, semi-conoidal form tapering to small disk type flat base (av. 6 in. diam.). Surface texture smooth. Tooling marks (paddle) occur in shoulder region to rim. Marks of scraping tool seen on surface of some specimens. No other embellishment or decoration.
TEMPER:	Sand of micaceous type. Some small grit grains.
COLOUR:	Reddish brown or buff. Rarely black.
MANUFACTURING METHOD:	Coiling.
HARDNESS:	2 to 2.5.
TYPE SITE:	Soksil (KY-2)
OTHER SITES:	KY-11, one sherd.
GEOGRAPHICAL RANGE:	Not known.
CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS:	Not known. Possibly evolved from Misa-ri types.
ASSOCIATED ARTIFACTS:	None found <i>in situ</i> . Rectanguloid chipped adze may relate to this level according to Dr Kim. Perforated pottery disk found in association at Soksil site. Also fragment of ground slate.

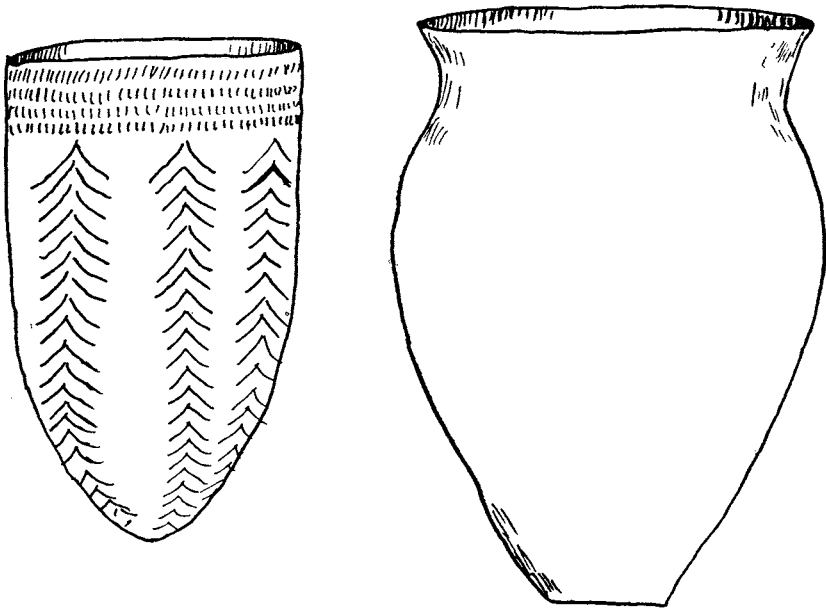


FIG. 1. Early-Middle Neolithic

- a. Misa-ri Incised. Early Neolithic b. Yangju Plain. Middle Neolithic

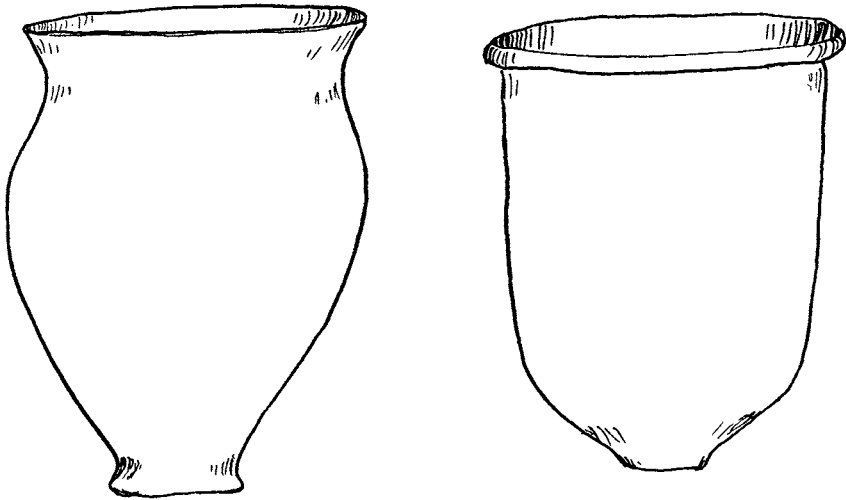


FIG. 2.

- a. Han River Plain Type A. Late Neolithic b. Han River Plain Type B. Late Neolithic

III. Late Neolithic Series

A. Han River Plain—Type A (Fig. 2a)

PRIOR DATA:	Described by Dr Kim (1960: 17) as 'Plain Course Pottery'. No other descriptions are known to the writer.
VESSEL DESCRIPTION:	Medium to thick straight-sided body with slight constriction of neck and some rim eversion. Tapers gradually to base. Base is flat disk somewhat expanded about the edges. Tooling (paddle) marks appear on all parts of body—especially from shoulder to rim. Inner surface smooth.
TEMPER:	Ungraded locally gathered grit. Particles extrude to the surface in the typical specimen.
SURFACE TEXTURE:	Somewhat rough owing to extruded grit grains. Because of poor firing, vulnerable to weathering. Weathered sherds easily pulverized between fingers.
COLOUR:	Buff, yellow, orange-brown to brown. Core is brown to black.
MANUFACTURING METHOD:	Some are coiled, however hand lamination was important part of process.
HARDNESS:	1.5 to 2.
PASTE:	Chalky. Streak obtainable on paper.
THICKNESS:	Thickest toward base. Average sherd is 3–4 mm.
TYPE SITE:	Soksil (KY-2)
GEOGRAPHICAL RANGE:	Not known. Types have been found in southern and southeastern provinces.
CULTURAL AFFINITY:	Probably the pottery of the proto-historic Mahan in Han Valley.
ASSOCIATED ARTIFACTS:	Ground slate fluted projectile point, polished tapered celt known Soksil.
CHRONOLOGICAL POSITION:	Guess date of 500 B.C. to beginning of Christian era probably fairly accurate.

B. Han River Plain—Type B (Fig. 2b)

PRIOR DATA:	Not known. Identified by Dr Kim as known from Late Neolithic sites elsewhere.
VESSEL DESCRIPTION:	Straight-sided medium-thick vessel characterized by applied roll-rim. Sides vertical nearly to base where they taper sharply to small disk flat base. Base is thickened and raised slightly. No surface decoration. All data, except for the following is identical to that given for Han River Plain A.
COLOUR:	Frequently black. Buff and dark brown known.
HARDNESS:	2 to 2.5.

C. Han River Plain—Type C (Fig. 3)

PRIOR DATA:	Little known. Dr Kim related this type to the 'horn-handled' pottery of the Kimhae shell mound which is proto-historic (pre-Silla) in that area. In form, type may be remotely related to certain globular handled vessels of Neolithic China.
VESSEL DESCRIPTION:	Globular bodied vessel, constricted small cylindrical neck which is straight to rim. Vessel lacks decoration. Base consists of slightly raised small disk. Features two opposing loop-type handles, slightly raised in the centre located above point where vessel is widest.
TEMPER:	Small to medium grit.
SURFACE TEXTURE:	Smooth. Pebble burnishing known on restorable specimen from Soksil.
HARDNESS:	3 to 3.5.
THICKNESS:	3 mm. overall except for raised base area. One partially restorable vessel found at Soksil was almost paper thin.
TYPE SITE:	Soksil (KY-2).
GEOGRAPHICAL RANGE:	Probably throughout South Korea.
CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS:	May be a type superimposed upon resident groups producing only Han River Plain A or B types.
NOTE:	This type of pottery was found <i>in situ</i> with Han River Plain A and therefore most likely contemporaneous.

D. Han River Simple Stamped (Pl. Ic).

PRIOR DATA:	Not known.
VESSEL DESCRIPTION:	This pottery is identical with Han River Plain A except for surface decoration described below. There are no differences in terms of temper, texture, colour or vessel form.
DECORATION:	Apparently paddled with a flat ribbed board or paddle-like implement giving entire surface from rim to base a channelled appearance. In one semi-restorable vessel, lip was slightly rounded and extruded to a very small degree.
OTHER DATA:	See Han River Plain A.

IV. Protohistoric Series

Note: At the time of this writing, pottery types in this series have not yet been completely worked up and therefore, only a superficial description can be rendered for the present.

A. Tokso-ri Check Stamped

PRIOR DATA:	Related to similar hard red potteries of Kimhae Shell Mound site near Pusan. These are proto-Silla types which are common in southern and eastern Korea.
VESSEL DESCRIPTION:	A grit tempered reddish coloured ware with globular body, constricted neck, sharply everted rim, with flattened occasionally grooved lip. Small to medium size checks, probably applied with a paddle, cover entire vessel except for zone between upper shoulder (going into neck) to rim. Some over-stamping in nearly all specimens. Large percentage have incised parallel lines running horizontally over checks (superimposed). Bases are flattened with rounded to slightly rounded edges. Some may be completely rounded with no flattening.
HARDNESS:	2.5 to 3.
TYPE SITE:	Tokso-ri (KY-11).
CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS:	Related to 'lattice-pattern' potteries known to Pyong-yang area and Manchuria (Neolithic). Appear also to be related to similar ware of south and east coastal Korea.
CHRONOLOGICAL POSITION:	In the Han River Valley, this ware appears to be a combination of Han River Plain and harder decorated wares (usually gray in colour) which were probably entering this region from North Korea. A fair guess date would be from 50 B.C. to A.D. 100 for persistence of the type.
NOTE:	See historical comment under description of Tokso-ri Simple Stamped.

B. Tokso-ri Simple and Complicated Stamp (Fig. 4).

PRIOR DATA:	Included with check stamp type in Korean descriptions as 'lattice-pattern' ware. (Kim 1960: 21).
VESSEL DESCRIPTION:	All characteristics identical with check stamp type except for decorative motif which consists either of a simple stamped surface applied with a paddle grooved in one direction only. Lands and grooves measure about 2 mm. wide. Complicated stamped involves application with the same type of paddle stamp but which has had additional grooves cut usually diagonally across the parallel series resulting in diamond or chevron motifs.
HARDNESS:	2.5 to 3.
TYPE SITE:	Tokso-ri (KY-11).
OTHER SITES:	Okkok (KY-13) One sherd.
OTHER DATA:	(See Tokso-ri Check Stamped).
NOTE:	This style of stamping dies out before the end of the Paekche Period (A.D. 600) whereas the check stamping trait persisted throughout unified Silla (A.D. 668 to 932) and into early Koryo (A.D. 932 to 1392) as an outside decoration of 'kitchen pottery'. In late Koryo only the inside of the vessel bore check stamping. This trait persists to the present day and modern <i>kim'chi</i> (pickled vegetable) jars may be seen in farmyards with the check stamped inner surface.

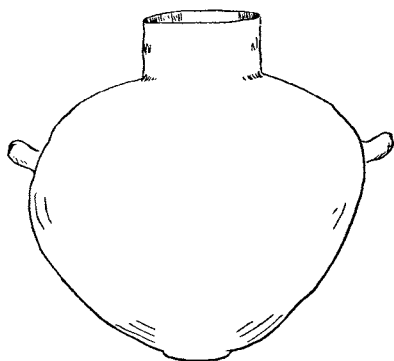


FIG. 3

Han River Plain Type C.
Late Neolithic

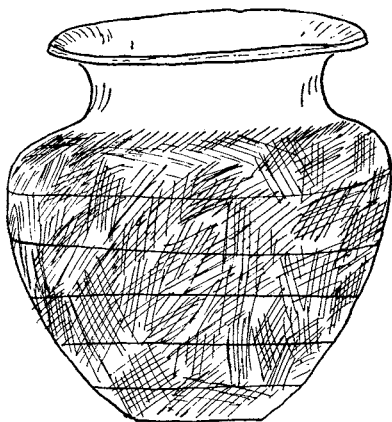


FIG. 4

Form and Decorated areas for Tokso-ri check, simple, complicated and cord-stamped. Proto-historic

C. Tokso-ri Cord Impressed (Fig. 4)

- PRIOR DATA:** Referred to by Kim as 'mat-pattern' pottery (Kim 1960: 25) whose origins may be in neolithic China. Known as a red to brown ware type in the Kimhae Shell Mound site.
- VESSEL DESCRIPTION:** In form, this pottery type resembles the Tokso-ri Check and Simple Stamp pottery. In nearly all specimens, thin incised parallel lines have been superimposed over the corded areas as upon check and simple stamped ware. Stamping was accomplished by the use of a cord-wrapped paddle and with very fine cord, uniform in thickness.
- COLOUR:** Ranges in shades of buff, red, brown and gray. Earlier type appears to be in shades of buff and red.
- HARDNESS:** Red or early: 2.5. Brown to gray: 2.5-4.
- TYPE SITE:** Tokso-ri (KY-11).
- OTHER SITES:** Okkok (KY-13) Four sherds.
- HISTORICAL NOTE:** This type of pottery, known in Honan Province, China as a neolithic product, persists as a minority ware into Paekche times changing in colour (to blue gray) and becoming true stoneware in hardness. Like the simple and complicated stamped wares it gradually disappears in Paekche times and by Unified Silla Period, is no longer seen in the Han River area.

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